N° 6.

LC14
102
R06

those, can they cease to be men?

The Love of Mankind is an important duty & an exalted virtue. Much has been written, much has been said, concerning the power of *intellectual* abstraction which man poſseſses, & which distinguishes him so eminently from the inferior orders of animals. But little has been said, little has been written, concerning another power of the human mind, still more dignified; &, beyond all comparison, more amiable; — I may call it the power of *moral* abstraction.

All things in Nature are individuals: But when a number of individuals have a near & striking resemblance, we, in our minds, claſs them together, & refer them to a species, to which we aſsign a name. Again: when a number of species have a resemblance, tho' not so near & striking, we, in the same manner, claſs them also together, & refer them to a genus, to which we likewise aſsign a name. Different genera

may have a resemblance, tho still leſs close & striking, we refer them to an higher genus, till we arrive at being, the highest genus of all. This is the progreſs of intellectual abstraction.

We are poſseſsed of a moral power, similar in its nature & in its progreſs, a principle of good will as well as of knowledge. This principle of benevolence is indeed primarily & chiefly directed towards individuals, those especially, with whom we are or wish to be most intimately connected. But this principle, as well as the other, is capable of abstraction, & of embracing general objects. The culture, the improvement & the extension of this principle ought to have made, in the estimation of Philosophers, as important a figure among the moral, as the other has made among the intellectual powers & operations of the mind; for it is susceptible of equal culture, of equal improvement, & of equal extension.

"After ~~having~~ having," says the illustrious Neckar in his book concerning the importance of religious opinions," proved myself a citizen of France, by my administration, as well as my writings, I wish to unite myself to a fraternity still more extended, that of the whole human race: Thus, without dispersing our sentiments, we may be able to communicate ourselves a great way off, & enlarge, in some measure, the limits of our circle: Glory be to our thinking faculties for it! To that spiritual portion of ourselves, which can take in the past, dart into futurity, & intimately aſsociate itself with the destiny of men of all countries, & of all ages."

To the same purpose is the sentiment of Cicero, in his beautiful treatise on the Nature & offices of Friendship. "In tracing the social Laws of Nature," says he, "it seems evident, that man, by the frame of his moral constitution is supposed to consider himself as standing in some degree of so-

cial relation to the whole species in general; & that this principle acts with more or leſs vigour, according to the distance at which he is placed with respect to any particular community, or individual of his kind."

This principle of benevolence & sociability, which is not confined to one sect or to one state, but ranges excursive thro' the whole expanded theatre of men & nations, instead of being always acknowledged & always recommended, as it ought to have been, has been altogether omitted by many philosophers: By some, its existence seems to have been doubted or denied.

"Some sort of union," says Rutherforth, in his institutes of natural law, "there is between all nations: They are all included in the collective idea of Mankind; & are frequently spoken of under this general name. But this is not a social union: The several

A The term, philanthropy, approaches near, but does not reach it.

=Idea —

" parts of the collective idea, whether we con-
" sider the great body of mankind as made
" up of individuals or of nations, are not con-
" nected, as the several parts of a civil society
" are, by compact among themselves. The
" connexion is merely notional, & is only
" made by the mind for its own convenience.

The very enlarged active power, concerning which I speak is, to this day, so far as I know, without an appropriated name. A ~~Sometimes~~ We sometimes call it Patriotism by a figurative extension of that term, w. in its proper meaning, denotes a circle of benevolence limited by the state, of which one is a member. When we speak of the most exalted of all characters, of the man, who possesses this virtue, we generally describe him, by a Metaphor, a Citizen of the World. A "man of the world," which would be the more natural expression, tho' it is in common use, is used to convey a very different ~~signification~~ [illegible]

If the general observations, which, in a former lecture, I had an opportunity of making I have before made concerning the nature, the structure & the evidence of Language, be well founded; the particular remarks I have now made, will appear to be striking & just.

This power of moral abstraction should be exercised & cultivated with the highest degree of attention & zeal. It is as neceſsary to the progreſs of exalted virtue, as the power of intellectual abstraction is to the progreſs of extensive knowledge. The progreſs of the former will be accompanied with a degree of pleasure, of utility & of excellence, far superior to any degree of those qualities, which can accompany the latter. —

The purest pleasures of mathematical learning spring from the source of accurate & extended intellectual abstraction. But those pleasures pure as they are,

must yield the palm to those, which arise# from Abstraction of the moral kind.

By this power, exerted in different proportions, the Commonwealth of Pensylvania; the Empire of the United States, the civilized & commercial part of the world, the Inhabitants of the whole earth, become objects of a benevolence the warmest, & of a spirit the most patriotic: for custom, the arbitreſs of languge, has not yet authorized a more appropriate Epithet. By this power, a number of individuals, who, considered separately, may be so minute, so unknown, or so distant, as to elude the operations of our benevolence; yet comprehended under one important & distinguished aspect, may become a general & complex object, which will warm & dilate the soul. By this power the capacity of our nature is enlarged; men otherwise invisible, are rendered

conspicuous; & become known to the heart as well as to the understanding.

This enlarged & elevated virtue ought to be cultivated by nations with peculiar aſsiduity & ardour. The sphere of *exertion*, to which an individual is confined, is frequently narrow, however enlarged his disposition may be. But the sphere, to the extent of which a state may exert herself, is often comparatively boundleſs. By exhibiting a glorious example in her constitution, in her laws, in the administration of her constitution & laws, she may diffuse reformation, she may diffuse instruction, she may diffuse happineſs over the whole terrestial globe.

How often, & how fatally are expreſsions & sentiments perverted! How often & how fatally is perverted conduct, the unavoidable & inveterate effect of per-

verted sentiment & expreſsion! What immense treasures have been exhausted, what oceans of human blood have been shed in France & England by force of the expreſsion "natural enemy." 'Tis an unnatural expreſsion. The Antitheses is truly in the thought. For natural ~~en~~ enmity forms no title in the genuine law of Nations, part of the law of Nature. It is adopted from a spurious code.

The foregoing rules & maxims of national Law, tho' they are the sacred, the inviolable, & the exalted precepts of Nature, & of Nature's Author, have been long unknown & unacknowledged among Nations. Even where they have been known & acknowledged, their calm still voice has been drowned by the solicitations of interest, the clamours of ambition, & the thunder of war. Many of the antient nations conceived themselves

to be under no obligations whatever to other states or the citizens of other States, unless they could produce in their favour a conne~~c~~xtion formed & cemented by a treaty of amity.

At last, however, the voice of Nature intelligible & persuasive, has been heard by Nations, that are civilized: At last it is acknowledged, that mankind are all brothers: The happy time, we hope, is approaching, when this acknowledgment will be substantiated by an uniform corresponding conduct.

How beautiful & energetic are the sentiments of Cicero upon this subject: "It is more consonant to Nature, that is, as he said a little before, to the law of Nations, to undertake the greatest labours, & to undergo the severest trouble, for the preservation & advantage of all Nations, if such a thing could be accomplished, than to live in solitary repose, not only without pain, but sur-

rounded with all the allurements of pleasure & wealth. Every one of a good & great mind, would prefer the first greatly before the second situation in life". — It is highly absurd to say, as some have said, that no one ought to injure a parent or brother, for the sake of his own advantage; but that another rule may be observed concerning the rest of the citizens: Such persons determine that there is no law, no bonds of society among the citizens, for the common benefit of the Commonwealth. This sentiment tends to diſsolve the union of the state. Others, again, admit that a social regard is to be paid to the citizens, but deny that this regard ought to be extended in favour of foreigners: Such persons would destroy the common society of the human race; & if this common society were destroyed, the destruct

tion would involve in it, the fate also of beneficence, liberality, goodneſs, justice. Which last virtue is the mistreſs & the queen of all the other virtues." By justice here, Cicero clearly means that universal justice, wc is the complete accomplishment of the Law of Nature.

It has been already observed that there is one part of the Law of Nations, called their voluntary law, which is founded on the principle of consent. Of this part, publick compacts & customs received & observed by civilized states form the most considerable articles.

Publick compacts are divided into two kinds, treaties & sponsions. Treaties are made by those, who are empowered by the constitution of a State to represent it in its transactions with other nations. Sponsions are made by an inferior magistrate or officer on behalf of the state, but without authority from it. Such

compacts, therefore, do not bind the State, unleſs it confirms them after they are made. These chiefly take place in negotiations & transactions between commanding officers during a war.

Tho' the power of making treaties is usually, it is not neceſsarily annexed, to Sovereign Power. Some of the Princes & free cities of Germany, tho' they hold of the Emperor & the Empire, have nevertheleſs the right of making treaties with foreign nations: This right, as well as several other rights of sovereignty, the constitution of the empire have secured to the empire have secured to them.

With a policy, wiser & more profound, because it shuts the door against foreign intrigues with the members of the union, no state comprehended within our national government, can enter into any treaty, alliance or confederation.

It is in the Constitution or fundamental laws of every nation, that we must search in order to discover what power it is, w: has sufficient authority to contract, with validity, in the name of the state.

A treaty is valid, if there has been no eſsential defect in the manner, in which it has been made; & in order to guard against eſsential defects, it is only neceſsary that there be sufficient power in the contracting parties, that their mutual consent be given, & that that consent be properly declared.

It is a truth certain, in the Law of Nature, that he who has made a promise to another, has given to that other a perfect right to demand the performance of the promise. Nations & the representatives of Nations, therefore, ought to preserve inviolably their treaties & their engagements. By not preserving them, they subject themselves to all the conse-

quences of violating the perfect right of those, to whom they were made. This great truth is generally acknowledged; but too frequently an irreligious disregard is shewn to it in the conduct of princes & States. But such a disregard is weak as well as wicked. In publick as in private life, among sovereigns as among individuals, honesty is the best policy, as well as the soundest morality. Among merchants, credit is wealth; among states & princes, good faith is both respectability & power.

A State, which violates the sacred faith of treaties, violates not only the voluntary, but Also the natural & necessary law of Nations; for we have seen that, by the law of Nature, the fulfilment of promises is a duty as much incumbent upon states as upon men. Indeed it is more incumbent on the former than on the latter; for the consequences

both of performing & of violating the engagements of the former are generally more important & more lasting than any which can flow from engagements performed or violated by individuals. Hence the strict propriety as well as the uncommon beauty of the sentiment – that if good faith were banished from every other place, she should find an inviolable sanctuary at least in the bosoms of Princes.

Every treaty should be illuminated by perspicuity & candour. A tricking minister is, in real infamy, degraded as much below a vulgar cheat as the dignity of states is raised above that of private persons. Ability & addreſs in negociation may be used to avoid, never to accomplish, a surprize.

Fraud in the subsequent interpretation is equally base & dishonourable as fraud in the original structure of

treaties. In the scale of turpitude it weighs equally with the most flagrant & notorious perfidy.

Treaties & alliances are either personal or real. The first relate only to the contracting parties, & expire with those who contract. The second relate to the state, in whose name & by whose authority the contract was made, & are permanent as the state itself, unleſs they determine, at another period, by their own limitation.

Every treaty or alliance made with a commonwealth is, in its own nature *real*: for it has reference solely to the body of the state. When a free people make an engagement, it is the nation, which contracts. It's stipulations depend not on the lives of those, who have been the instruments ~~of~~ in forming the treaty; nor even on the lives of those citizens, who

were alive when the treaty was formed. They change; but the commonwealth continues the same.

Hence the stability & the security of treaties made with commonwealths. By the faithful observance of their treaties, the Cantons of Switzerland have rendered themselves respectable & respected all over Europe. Let it be mentioned to the honour of the Parliament of Great Britain that it has frequently thanked its King for his zeal & attachment to the treaties, in which he has engaged the Nation.

The corruption of the best things & institutions, however, always degenerates into the worst. The Citizens of *Carthage* prostituted the character of their republick to such a degree that, if we may believe the testimony of an enemy, *punica fides*, became proverbial, over the antient world, to denote the extreme of perfidy.

As the United States have surpaſsed others, even other Commonwealths in the excellence of their Constitution & Government; it is reasonably to be hoped that they will surpaſs them likewise in the stability of their laws & in their fidelity to ~~of~~ their engagements.

In the great chart of the globe of credit, we hope to see American placed as the very antipode of Carthagenian Faith

Montgomery 68 g

68-54

N°6.